Language politeness performed by politicians in the discourse of Jakarta election 2017 at online portal news

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Abstract

Jakarta Election 2017 was a phenomenal one from many points of views including aspect of language use as political tool. Therefore, this study aims to describe the politeness level of politicians in the discourse of Jakarta election 2017 at online portal news. This research used a qualitative approach with descriptive method. Analyzing the data was exercised by content analysis method with the application of language politeness theory from Brown-Levinson and Leech. Based on data analysis, politicians are more dominant to convey their ideas through a rhetorical style of irony, expressive speech acts, and vague strategies; they also tend to violate rather than adhere to the politeness principle so, it was ‘high potential’ to threaten the face of the intended person or party. Based on the findings of this research, the level of language politeness performed by politicians in Jakarta Election is represented in three divisions; about 48% of comments of the politicians are at an ‘impolite’, 15% are at ‘less polite’ level, and only 36% are in the ‘polite’ category.

Keywords: language politeness, speech acts, political discourse

Introduction

Jakarta 2017 Elections in became the most controversial regional elections as Agustina (2017, p. 130) where there are four things underlying the problems are as follows. Firstly, although DKI Jakarta is just one of the provinces in Indonesia, but DKI Jakarta is also the capital city of Indonesia and the gateway of Indonesia. Secondly, the Jakarta Election is allegedly loaded with the political interests of two major groups, which are the supporter of the government and the opposite side or contrary to the government, each with its supporting parties. Third, one of the candidates of governor and also the person who governed at that time, was involved in a SARA case that sparked a prolonged polemic, not only in Jakarta but also in other parts of Indonesia region. Fourth, based on some experts’ estimation, Jakarta Election is a determinant barometer of political temperature of Indonesia. One of the causes of such problems occurs because the uses of language are widely misused by the parties involved in Jakarta Election; one of them is the politician.

Politicians are one group of people who are expected to communicate with polite because basically human life is never separated from politics. Thus, it can be said that politicians are role models for
society. Furthermore, politicians are identical with someone who is capable of using words in public with the aim of criticizing, advising, suggesting, refuting, blaming, justifying, attacking, persuading, and seducing. The language used by politicians to achieve their goals varies widely. However, politicians are frequently also to speak impolitely, lead to rude, and tend to twist the facts. This is evidenced also from some of the results of research, such as in Pakistan (Yasmeen, Jabeen, & Akram, 2014); in Indonesia (Mujianto, 2013; Setyawan, 2015; Luthfiyanti, 2017; Wulandari, 2017).

From the results of these studies, it appears that politicians still often speak in polite not to express opinions. It is proven by the politician’s neglect of the elements of politeness as well as violations of the politeness principle resulting in a bad impact for speakers and the receivers. This is also triggered by the freedom of the press in Indonesia which has been increasingly liberal since the reform era (Ardianto & Erdinaya, 2004: 155). This condition is in harmony with research conducted by Peterson (2015) in India on the connection between the press and democracy. Such facts is also occurred in Jakarta 2017 Election, which according to Agustina (2017 p. 130) is the most phenomenal and controversial elections because it is not only brimming with political content, but also has implications for the use of language as its political means.

Based on above phenomenon, the problem of this research is “How is the form of language politeness performed by politicians in political discourse of Jakarta 2017 Election at the online news portal?” with four focuses of discussion. The focuses are (1) what kinds of speech acts are used as the manifestation of politeness, (2) what figures of speech are used as expression of politeness, (3) what speech strategies are used, and (4) how does the application of politeness principles performed by politicians in political discourse of Jakarta 2017 Election.

Method

The type of this research was qualitative-descriptive research where to describe the object as clear as possible and to explain the data accurately, systematically, and comprehensively. In this case, the role of the researcher was as a key instrument. Technique of collecting data was done in combination; analysis techniques were inductive; the results of research emphasized mainly in the meaning than generalization of the data (Sugiyono, 2009, p. 285); Sudaryanto, 1992, p. 62). The data of this research were the speeches of politicians in political discourse of Jakarta 2017 Election at online news portal specifically in detik.com, kompas.com, vivaneus.com, merdekaand liputan6.com. The data were taken randomly from January to April 2017 and were collected with the techniques of note-taking and documentation, while analyzing data by using Miles and Huberman’s theory with three stages: reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions.

Results and Discussion

Based on the identification of data in accordance with the proposed problem, it is obtained a classification of the data of verbal violence by politicians in the discourse of the Jakarta Election and its implications for language politeness as shown in the following table.
Table 1. Representation of Language Politeness of Politicians in the discourse of Jakarta Election in Mass Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech type</th>
<th>Total Language style and figure of speech type</th>
<th>Total Speech strategy</th>
<th>Total Politeness principles</th>
<th>Adherence</th>
<th>Violation</th>
<th>Percentages FTA</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ekspresif</td>
<td>49 Sarkasme</td>
<td>26 Terus Terang</td>
<td>31 Kebijaksanan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48 Tng gi</td>
<td>Tdk santun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direktif</td>
<td>12 Sinisme</td>
<td>31 KstnNega tif</td>
<td>22 Kedrmwana n</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15 Agak tingga n</td>
<td>Kurangsan t</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asertif</td>
<td>35 Ironi</td>
<td>40 KstnPositif</td>
<td>11 Pujian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deklarasi</td>
<td>7 Antifrasi</td>
<td>5 Samarsamar</td>
<td>40 KrendhanHati</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komisif</td>
<td>1 Alusio</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 Kesepekanah</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36 Rend ah &amp; Santun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>104 Kesimpatian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100 Netera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Use of Speech Acts

In conveying their opinions, the most dominant speech acts used by politicians is expressive (49 data) in the form of praising, criticizing, scolding, insinuating, condemning, and accusing. Furthermore, politicians also frequently used speech acts of representative (35 data) in the form of stating, showing, complaining, boasting, expressing opinions, and reporting; the third one is directive speech acts (12 data) in the form of warning, suggesting, demanding, ordering, inviting, and pleading. The least-used speech act is declarative (7 data) in the form of prohibiting; and and commissive type (1 data) in the form of threatening. The types of speech acts are shown in the following examples: representative (1), directive (2), expressive (3), commissive (4), and declarative (5).

1. There is no need for court to follow FadliZon’s inconsequent interpretation where there is on the behalf of the community? said by former supporter group member (DT24, C / 28/04/2017).
   “Masak putusan pengadilan harus mengikuti tafsir semau-maunya Fadli Zon yang mengatasnamakan masyarakat?” said Yandri(KP3, Y: 19/02/2017).

2. I guess if he want to be dragged into coalition issues on Jakarta election, Mr Jokowi will suffer a big-loss, said Yandri (KP3, Y: 19/02/2017).
   “Saya kira kalau berpikir demikian Pak Jokowi yang rugi untuk mau diseret-seret kemasalah koalisi pilkada di DKI,” kata Yandri(KP3, Y: 19/02/2017).

3. Islam is not as frightening as it is. Islam is embracing people, not hitting people, closed by Djarot (DT3, D: 20/03/2017).

4. Yes, from the beginning of the process of Jakarta Election PAN wants to find an alternative choice to the people of Jakarta. From the beginning, PAN was not going to support Ahok because of the
character and ethics do not match to the party” said Yandri on the same occasion (LP3, YS: 18/02/2017).

“Ya, dari awal proses pilkada DKI PAN ingin mencari alternatif pilihan kepada rakyat DKI. Sejak awal PAN sudah bersikap tidak akan mendukung Ahok karena dari karakter dan etika tidak cocok sama PAN,” ucap Yandri dalam kesempatan yang sama (LP3, YS: 18/02/2017).

5. “Maybe the government should not intervene and better take care of bigger business, let politics run in accordance with existing rules” he concluded (RM10, E: 30/03/2017).

"Dan pemerintah tidak usah ikut mengintervensi lebih baik mengurus urusan yang lebihbesar, biarkan politik berjalan sesuai dengan aturan yang sudah ada,” pungkasnya (RM10: 30/03/2017).

In speech (1), politician uses the speech act of representative in the form of complaining on the sentence “there is no need for court to follow FadliZon’s inconsequent interpretation” toward an unfair decision by the court because of following FadliZon’s opinions. In the statement (2) the politician performs a directive speech act in the form of warning on the sentence “Mr Jokowi will suffer a big-loss” with the aim of providing a warning to Mr. Jokowi to not interfere or involve in Jakarta 2017 Election because it will just drag Jokowi into a trouble. Utterance (3) is a type of expressive speech acts by way of criticism; it is aimed at those who use the issue of SARA in Jakarta 2017 Election. Further, speeches no. (4) and (5) are conveyed with commissive speech acts in the form of threatening.

The Use of Language Style and Figure of Speech

The politicians while expressing their opinions recurrently apply figurative speech of sarcasm. It is evident that from a total of 104 data, the most dominant occurrence is figurative speech of irony (40 data), cynicism (31 data), sarcasm (26 data), antiphrasis (5 data), and pun (2 data). Some of these are seen in the following samples: irony (6), cynicism (7), sarcasm, (8), antiphrasis (9), and pun (10).

6. Me myself as Ketum Fuhab, according to Islamic teachings, it is a must to choose a leader who loves and is being loved by Allah. We are to choose leaders who believe in Allah, said Chairman of the Fuhab, KH Syukron Makmun (LP9, F: 23/02/2017).


7. I think only the defendant (Ahok) alone talks about this (Al-Maidah verse 51 in political affairs), so it becomes a polemic that should not have happened,” he said in a hearing at the Auditorium of the Ministry of Agriculture (LP5, MA: 21/02/2017).


8. Jakarta Election is over, but FadliZon still shows a childish attitude. Or maybe FadliZon has another agenda by continuing to corner Ahok and glorifying SARA sentiments?” (DT26, C: 28/04/2017).

"Pilkada DKI sudah selesai, tetapi Fadli Zo masih menunjukkan sikap kekanak-kanakan. Atau jangan-jangan Fadli Zon punya agenda lain dengan terus memojokkan Ahok dan menggoreng sentimen SARA?" (DT26, C: 28/04/2017).

9. There is no original program from Ahok-Djarot. The whole programs are others, said the pair number 3,” said Ahok (DT8, AH: 22/03/2017).
"Mana adasih program asli Ahok-Djarot. Semuakan program orang, kata pasangan nomor 3," ujar Ahok sambil (DT8, AH: 22/03/2017).

10. The mosque is a place to proclaim all the good things. Place for embracing not to hit, for inviting not to mock. No more mutually disbelieving and hypocritical” says Yenny (DT28, Y: 29/04/2017).


The use of figurative speech of irony in data (6) is characterized by a sentence... Islamic teachings must choose a leader who loves and is being loved by Allah because the paragon already exists which is delivered in an indirect way, but the speech is clearly threatening the face of the receiver. Furthermore, the use of figurative speech of cynicism in data (7) is indicated by a statement only him (Ahok) which complain about this (Al-Maidah Verse 51), so it becomes a polemic that should not have happened. Moreover, the use of figurative speech of sarcasm in data (8) is marked by a statement childish attitude and by continuing to corner Ahok and glorifying SARA sentiments which is delivered directly so as to cause pain to the party in question. As well in utterance (9) it is conveyed with an figurative speech of antiphrasis that mocks the receiver by using statements that are meaningfully reversed from the words used. In contrast, data (10) is conveyed with a figurative speech of Pun where the speaker uses an allusion with similar sound to tease the hearer in the word: to embrace not to hit, to invite not to mock. The similarity of sounds spoken by speakers (Yenny) intends to insinuate the parties who use the mosque for a place to spread SARA issues than to spread goodness.

The Use of Speech Strategy

The politicians in delivering their comments related to Jakarta 2017 Election at the online news portal use four politeness strategies such as bald on record (31 data), negative politeness (22 data), positive politeness (12 data) and vague politeness (40 data). Among its uses, it can be seen in the following example, bald on record (11), negative politeness (12), positive politeness (13), and vague politeness (14-15)

11. The thing is, they are just brazen-face. Thug, he thinks I can not stop him. Hence, I want to ask the Police to act. He thinks we are not governors anymore, "he said (VN17, AA: 25/04/2017).


12. The debate is good. I am present to watch the debate and also as an observer. I am a former resident of Jakarta. Jakarta needs smart and nimble hands. It only exists in number two" said Antasari (KP1, AS: 27/03/2017).


13. Honorable politicians, whom I respect, please behave as statesmen. Jakarta election is officially over. Now is the time to focus on building a better Jakarta,” says Charles (DT271, CH: 28/04/2017).

14. "Why did I convey this? There are 480 more polling stations that we won in the numbers are above 90 percent. Is it possible (if) in that place, we won about 90 percent? It is a joke. But I also do not know what happened. So I say funny," said Anies (DT2, AN: 19/03/2017).


The use of bald on record strategy in data (11) is conveyed directly to denounce the attitude of the intended party by using word just a brazen-face which can threaten and lose the face of the party-referred in the speech. In the data (12), the speaker uses a positive politeness strategy through the sentence Jakarta needs smart and nimble hands. It only exists in number two which aims to give spirit to the intended party. Furthermore, in the data (13) politicians' comments were delivered using a negative politeness strategy with phrases Honorable politicians whom I respect with a view to respect the receiver despite the softening of the power of the illucution, so the speech was perceived much more polite. Another case with speech (14), comments are delivered with a vague strategy. That is, speaker ridicules the receiver in an indirect way or impliedly.

The Use of Politeness Principle

Of a total of 104 data, only 7 utterances comply with the politeness principle. Meanwhile, there are 98 comments clearly violate the politeness principle which includes tact (10 data), generosity (3 data), approbation (53 data), modesty (7 data), agreement (21 data) and sympathy (3 data). The violations is shown in the following sample data such as tact (15), generosity (16), approbation (17), modesty (18), agreement (19) and sympathy (20).

15. "Maybe the government should not intervene and better take care of bigger business, let politics run in accordance with existing rules" he concluded (RM10,E:30/03/2017).

"Dan pemerintah tidak usah ikut mengintervensi lebih baik mengurus urusan yang lebih besar, biarkan politik berjalan sesuai dengan aturan yang sudah ada," pungkasnya (RM10,E:30/03/2017).

16. "I'm sure this sort of thing exists in every region. Therefore I ask the authorities to reveal everything, who printed it, who ordered it, and who financed it. Because this is clearly detrimental to us," said Taufik (VN4, T: 14/02/2017).


17. "I do not (imitate). The kopiah (cap) have been used from a long time ago. They (other candidates) are just big-headed if Mr. Djarot imitates them. MrSukarno also wore the cap. Do not be over-confident, hehe ...," said Toni (LP10, T: 24/03/2017).


18. "If I wear the cap, it would be gorgeous, said Ahok jokingly (LP11, AH / 24/03/2017).

"Kalau pakai peci terlalu ganteng,"selorohAhok (LP11,AH/24/03/2017).

19. "If the defendant (Ahok) does not talk about Al Maidah, it would be easy. However, it is a political competition. There is no problem if the defendant did not discuss (Al Maidah 51) in PulauSeribu," he said (LP4, MA: 21/02/2017).

20. "Yes, from the beginning of the process of Jakarta Election PAN wants to find an alternative choice to the people of Jakarta. From the beginning, PAN was not going to support Ahok because of the character and ethics do not match to the party” said Yandri on the same occasion (LP3, YS: 18/02/2017).

"Ya, dari awal proses pilkada DKI PAN ingin mencari alternative pilihan kepada rakyat DKI. Sejaka wal PAN sudah bersikap tidak akan mendukung Ahok karena dari karakter dan etika tidak cocok sama PAN," ucap Yandri dalam kesempatan yang sama (LP3, YS: 18/02/2017).

Violation of the tact principle is seen in the data (15) because the speech gives harm to the intended party. It is seen in the use of a statement in bold with the intention of forbidding the government not to interfere with the speaker’s affairs. In the data (16), it also seen that the speaker violates the politeness principle of generosity with the use of utterance ...I ask the apparatus to reveal everything with the intention of asking officials to immediately reveal the mastermind behind the black campaign. That statement of request mainly benefited the speaker, but indirectly could harm the interested party. Furthermore, in the data (17), the speech violates the approbation maxim, by way of criticizing the opponent’s face by using the expression they (other candidates) are just big-headed which intends to criticize other candidates who are considered too confident. Then, the utterance (18) violates the principle of modesty through the use of a sentence if I wear a peci (cap), (it would be) too gorgeous. In this case, the politician praises himself by declaring proudness about his appearance. Violations of the politeness principle also occur in speech (19) namely agreement principle; while the utterance (20) violates the sympathy principle.

Based on data analysis toward the four elements of politeness as the purpose of this study, it can be represented into the four points. First, based on the dominance of politicians’ choice on expressive speech acts (49 data), the use sarcastic language style (26 data), the use bald on record strategy (31 data) as well as a total violation of the politeness principle (97 data) it shows that 48% of the total speech of the politicians is on a high level of FTA. This is seen in the speeches of the politicians which dominantly use the expressive speech acts in the form of praising, criticizing, insinuating, disgracing, and even blasting.

Based on these explanations, these politicians’ comments potentially threaten a positive face of the interlocutors, as described by Brown and Levinson (1987, p.62); the actions that threaten the positive face are expression of criticism, degrading or humiliating acts, complaining, and disturbing, blaming, insulting, and the like. In addition, the expression of comments is conveyed in a rough and direct way, so that speaker commonly violates the politeness principle. Thus, based on that explanation, speakers are in the classification of ‘impolite’. In line with ‘scale of indirectness’ parameter from Bulm-Kulka (in Amir, et al., 2006: 14) where “the more direct an utterance, the more impolite it is and vice versa.” This classification is indicated by red color in the table which indicates that the utterances belong to a ‘dangerous’ category.

Second, the less dominant choice is in the types of directive and commissive speech acts (13 data), the use of cynical language style (31 data), the use negative politeness strategy (22 data). It represent that 15% of the total speechand statements of the politicians is on a quite-high level of FTA. It can be
seen that the politicians frequently use the type of directive speech, in the form of warning, demanding, inviting, and ordering where it has the potential to threaten the opponent’s face, especially the negative face. In accordance with that opinion, Brown and Levinson (1987: 62) state that speech acts that threaten the negative face, among them are the expression of hatred, anger, order, warning, threat, and so forth. Thus, the speakers in this case are in the ‘less polite’ classification. This classification is indicated by yellow color in the table which indicates that the utterances belong to a ‘dangerous’ category.

Thirdly, although this choice is fairly dominant in the types of representative and declarative (42 data), the choice of figurative speech of irony, antifrasis, and pun (47 data), and the use of positive and vague politeness strategies (51 data), but 36% of politicians’s comments are on low level of FTA. This is due to the use of representative and declarative speech acts with forms stating, reporting, mentioning, showing and so forth which is expressed indirectly and properly. This is in agreement with Grice’s theory (in Pranowo, 2008: 362) “Choose a statement that does not underestimate the status of the hearer.” Although the comment is aimed at insinuating or criticizing the receiver, the indirect way of delivery makes this politician’s speeches include into the category of “polite.” This fact is in line with ‘scale of indirectness’ parameter from Bulm-Kulka (1985:14) where “the more indirect an utterance, the more polite it is.” This classification is indicated by green color in the table which indicates that the utterances belong to a ‘less dangerous’ category.

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded as follows. First, the most used of speech act by politicians in the political discourse of Jakarta 2017 Election at online news portal is expressive and representative type. Second, politicians tend to choose ironical and cynical language style in the political discourse of Jakarta 2017 Election at the online news portal. Third, the speech strategy frequently used by these politicians in the political discourse of Jakarta 2017 Election is a vague and bald on record strategy. Fourth, politicians primarily violate the principles of politeness rather than obey the principles. Fifth, the level of politeness shown by politicians in the political discourse of the elections of DKI Jakarta 2017 can be classified into three categories, (1) impolite (48%), (2) less polite (15%), (3) quite polite (36%). Based on the percentage used, although there are still politicians who speak impolite and quite-polite, but in general, the level of language politeness of politicians in the political discourse of Jakarta 2017 Election is in a ‘less-polite’ position.

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Reference


